



Design for Life Montgomery

A Program of Montgomery County, MD &
Maryland-National Capital
Building Industry Association



.... for All Ages & Stages of Life



**A Voluntary Certification Program for Visit-Ability and
Live-Ability in Single Family Attached and Detached Homes**
New Construction & Renovation of Existing Homes

Goal

To voluntarily bring basic access into the mainstream of building design in both new construction and renovation.



Photo Courtesy of Concrete Change®

Basic Home Access Is Convenient For Everyone....

- new mom with a baby stroller
- football player on crutches
- injured soldier or Veteran
- moving furniture into your home
- welcoming to all guests, young and older, who cannot negotiate steps
- all who desire to stay in their own home – who don't want to move due to changing physical conditions
- convenient for ALL,
essential for MANY...



Photo Courtesy of Concrete Change®



Photo from [iStockPhoto](#)

Basic Accessibility...

Not Fair Housing, Not Universal Design!

- **Not intended to meet the requirements of the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act (FHAAG) of 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or of Universal Design.**
- **Accessibility not required throughout the house.**
- **Features generally follow principles in the national Visit-ability movement, Georgia's EasyLiving Home[©] Program, and some aspects of Universal Design.**
- **Federal legislation only applies to multifamily dwelling units.**

Today's Typical Home Design: New Construction

Montgomery County Homes – what do these all have in common?

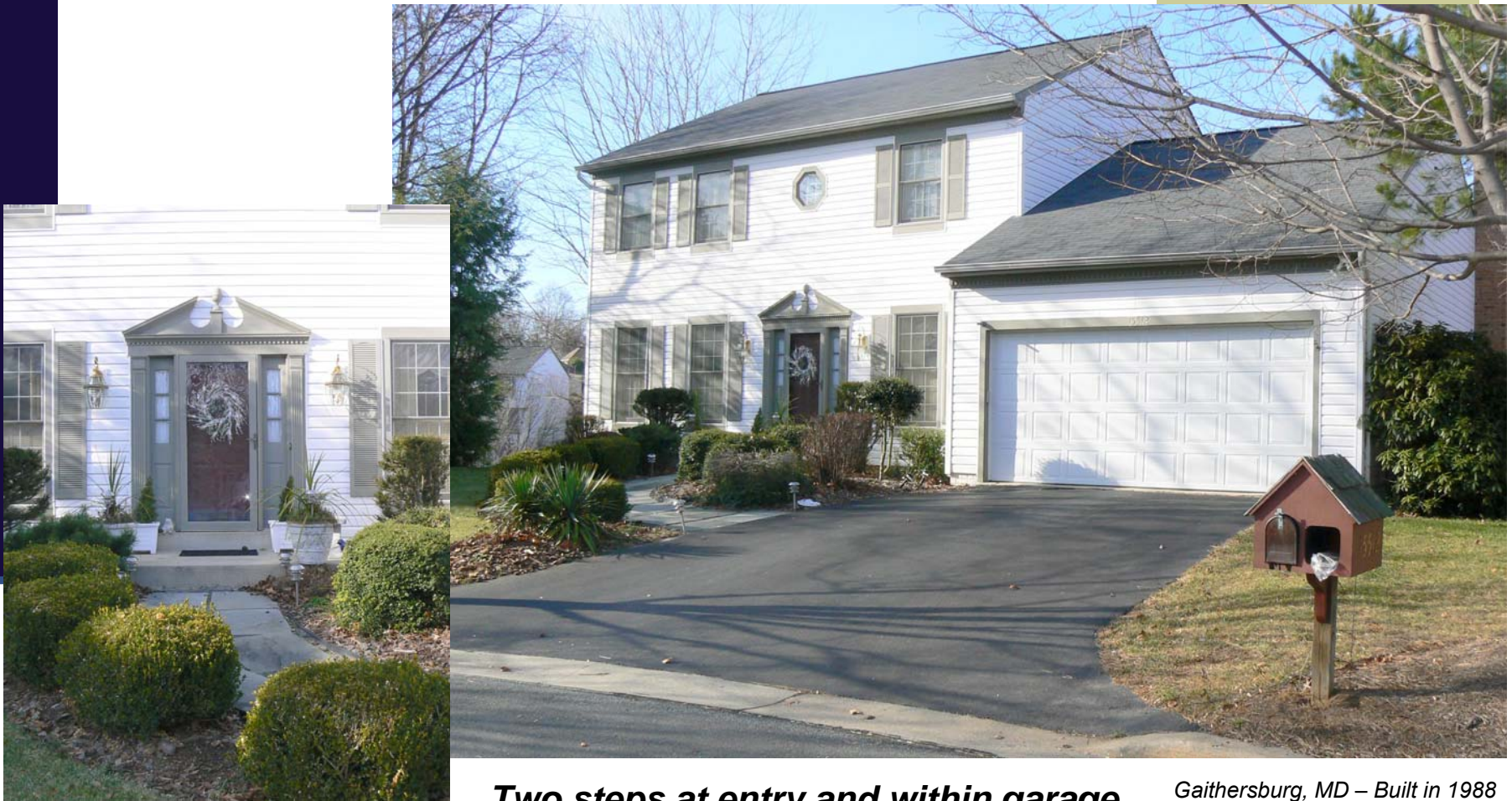


Photos from [iStockPhoto](#)

What do they all have in common?

***Steps, steps, and
more steps!!!***

Typical, Not Accessible Design: Existing Older Property



Two steps at entry and within garage

Gaithersburg, MD – Built in 1988

Accessible: But Probably Not Attractive to Average Homebuyer...



Photo from [iStockphoto](#)

Ramps

- Ramps can provide access for new and existing construction
- Ramps can be eliminated with proper site preparation
- In these photos, white stain on the spindles to match these homes and some shrubs would help blend the ramps in with the exterior of this new, and one older renovated home...
- If not done properly, can overwhelm the entrance



Potomac, MD



District of Columbia

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

A Visit-Able home has...

1. An accessible route from a sidewalk or driveway to a no step entry.

Myth: Most people think the accessible entry must be at the front door.

Fact: Instead, consider any and all entries for accessibility. The entry can be at the front door, back door, side door (any door), deck or through the garage.



Rendering Courtesy of Winchester Homes®
Anticipated Delivery Date – Summer, 2008

Balancing aesthetics and design: Level entry through garage

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #2:

Front Door No Step Entry: Single Family Home



Boys, MD –
Photos Courtesy of www.DisabilityGuide.org

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #3:

Front Door No Step Entry: Single Family Home Renovation



Before



After – retaining wall, lower driveway added garage, windows changed –all design features are on Design for Life website

Takoma Park, MD



Accessible entry under porch. Elevator from basement to all levels.

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #4:

Side Door No Step Entry: Single Family Home Renovation



Montgomery Village, MD



Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #5

Garage No Step Entry: Even though the front entry is level, the garage entry alone meets the level entry requirement.



Boys, MD – Photos Courtesy of www.DisabilityGuide.org

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #6

Back Door/Lower Accessible Entry: Has gate to an accessible walkway off the driveway.



North Potomac, MD - Photo Courtesy of Louis Tenenbaum www.louistenenbaum.com

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #7

Front Door/Garage No Step-Entry: Townhome – New Construction

This Visit-Able home has steps to the front door, *but also* has an accessible route through the garage with the lift behind the partition in front of the car spaces.



Garage



Stairlift in the garage

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

Example #8

Front Door No Step Entry: Existing Older Townhome



Townhome in Silver Spring

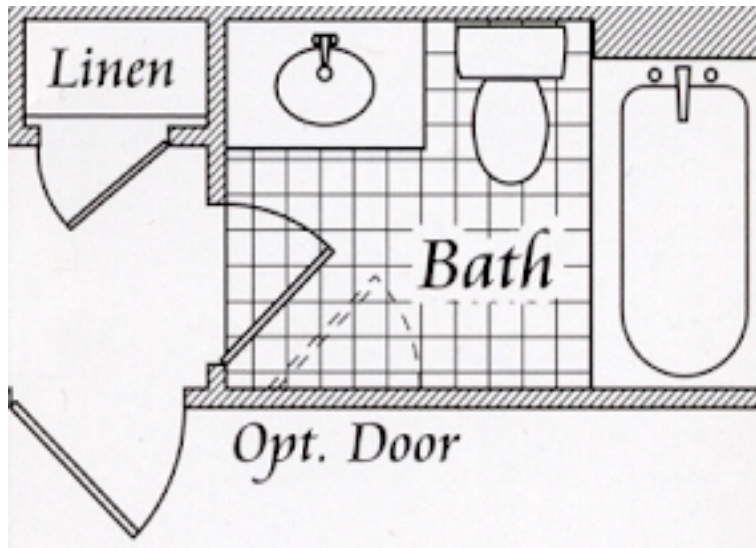
What We Have Today... What We Hope for Tomorrow

- Existing County accessible townhomes have typically been built with builders using the increase in density for housing for seniors or persons with disabilities, as defined in Section 59-A-2 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance.

- ***For future design, the goal is to bring access in the mainstream of building design, hopefully, for all design of new construction and renovation.***

Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

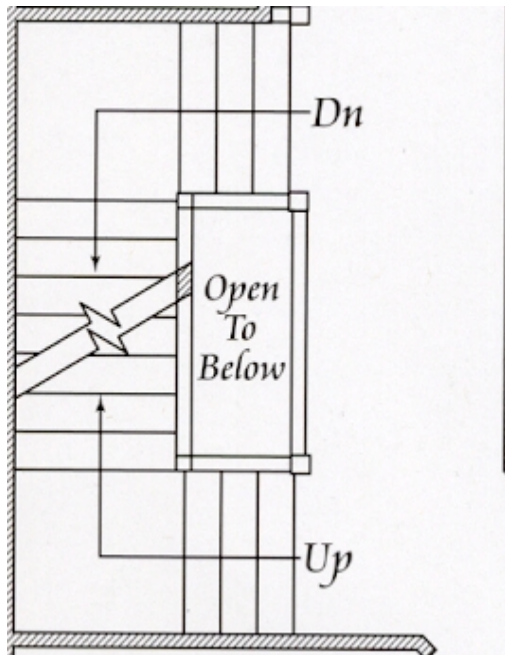
2. A minimum of 32 inches of clear passage space for every interior door, on the accessible floor, including bathrooms. Note the 32 inch bathroom door width.



The Brownstones at Park Potomac, Photo Courtesy of www.EYA.com

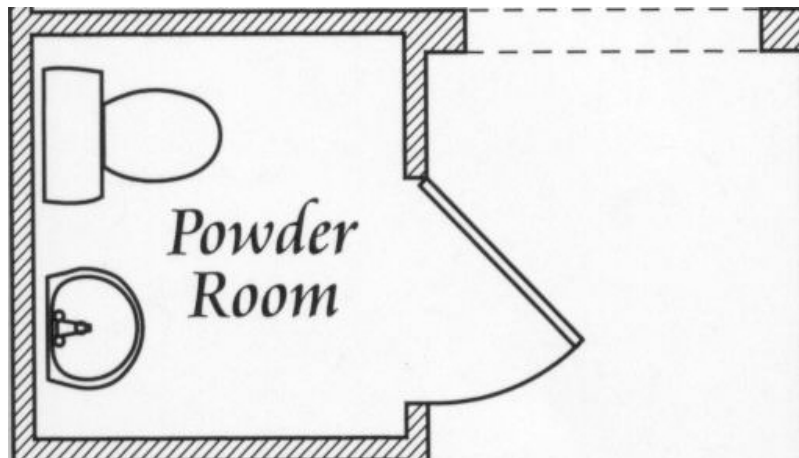
Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

3. A circulation path (hallway) that is at least 36 inches wide and connects to a powder room / bathroom and one other room that can accommodate visits.



Design Elements of A Visit-Able Home

4. A powder room/bathroom with sufficient maneuvering space. A 5' clear floor space is *not* required. By swinging door out, a clear space of 30" x 48" meets the requirement.

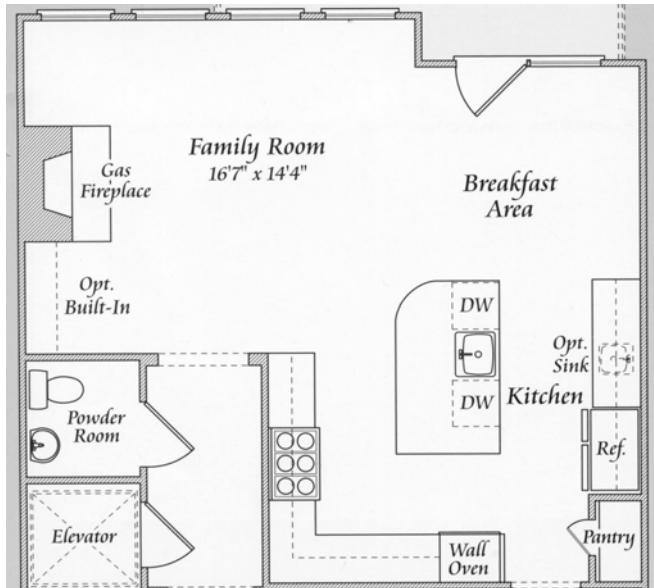


The Brownstones at Park Potomac, Photo Courtesy of www.EYA.com

Design Elements of A Live-Able Home

Have all the design features of a Visit-Able home plus, a circulation path that connects the accessible entrance to a ...

1. Full kitchen



The Brownstones at Park Potomac, Photos Courtesy of www.EYA.com

Design Elements of A Live-Able Home

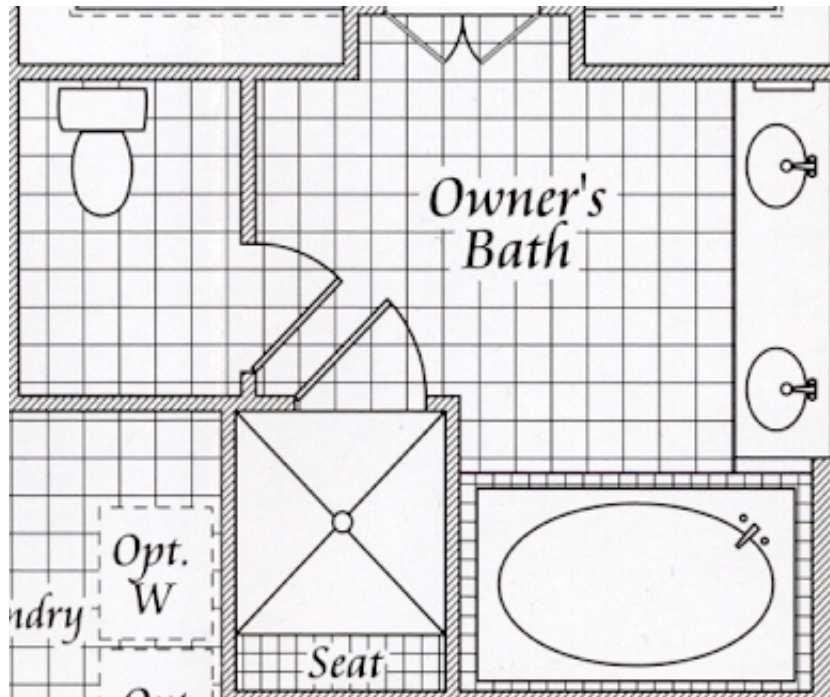
2. At least one bedroom on an accessible floor.



The Brownstones at Park Potomac, Photo Courtesy of www.EYA.com

Design Elements of A Live-Able Home

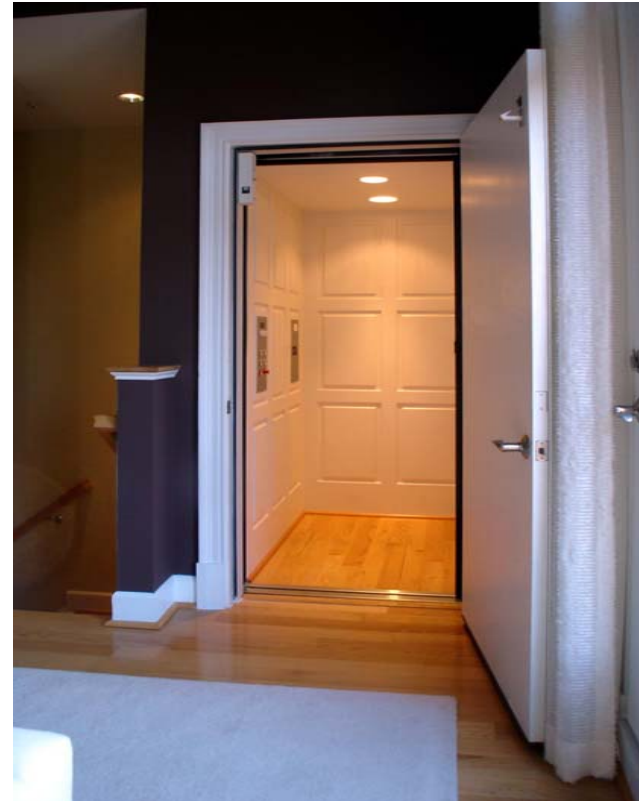
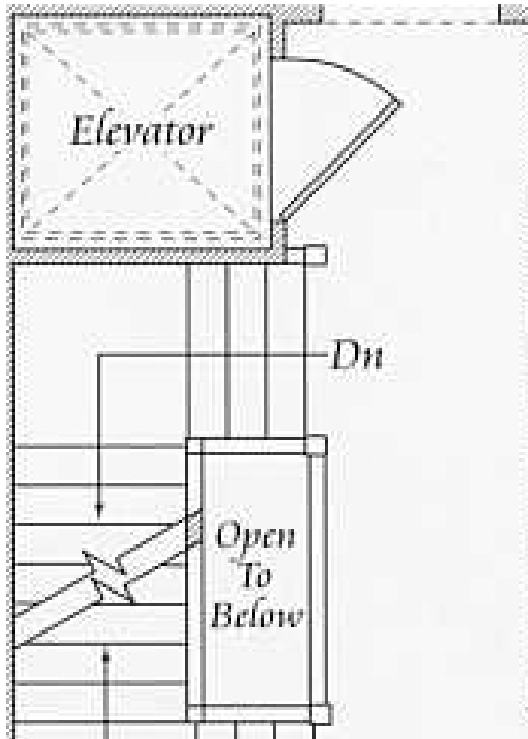
3. A full bathroom with sufficient space to allow maneuvering with accessible shower or tub.



The Brownstones at Park Potomac, Photo Courtesy of www.EYA.com

Design Elements of A Live-Able Home

4. Or, an elevator to these rooms.



Door to elevator.

The Brownstones at Park Potomac, Photo Courtesy of www.EYA.com

Influence the Market

- Tell friends and family to request basic accessibility in renovation or new construction. The market will drive this, if the buyer requests it.



Photo from [iStockPhoto](#)

Benefits to Builders & Realtors

- By 2009, about 1/3 of the U.S. population will be 50 or older
- Builders will need to step up to meet the needs of buyers
- Enlarged pool of buyers benefits both builders and realtors
- Promotes basic accessible building design, *attractive to homebuyers*

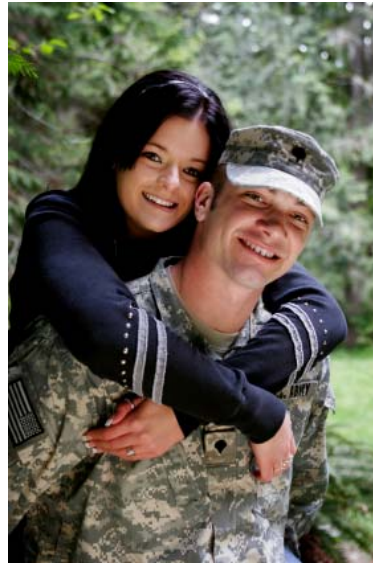


Photo from [iStockPhoto](#)



Benefits to Homeowner/Homebuyer

- Welcomes all visitors
- Safer and easier to live in
- Provides home for life, eliminating the need to move due to changing physical needs of yourself, family or friends
- Increases potential buyer market for your home: a typical home lasting 50-75 years will house nine or more different families with differing needs



Zoning & Permit Approval/Inspections

1. Administrated by the County as part of the **regular permitting process**, not special process:

- A checkbox for review and certification is on the **standard application** for building permit.
- There are **no additional permitting costs**, beyond the standard fees.
- For existing homes that already have either features, and choose to be certified, please apply to Permitting for an Alteration Permit. A minimum fee will be charged, inspection completed and will include issuance of a certificate.



Photo from [iStockPhoto](#)

Accessibility features should be shown on the normal application process site plan drawing and must be shown to scale.

2. After final building inspection, the Department of Permitting Services will issue the Montgomery County Design for Life Montgomery Voluntary Certificate.

Construction Guidelines & Permitting Process



Montgomery County Maryland
Department of Permitting Services
Phone: 202-777-6226 Fax: 202-777-6226
TTY: 202-777-6226
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/permitting
Office of Permitting & Building Construction



Guidelines

Voluntary Certification Program for Visual Ability and Live Ability
in Single Family Attached and Detached homes
New Construction & Renovation
February, 2007

The construction guidelines are available online:

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/hhs/ads/DesignForLife/designforlifeguidelines.pdf

and from Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services.

For all design/permitting questions regarding **Design for Life Montgomery** please contact:

Hemal Mustafa, Permitting Services Manager

240-777-6226 (V)

Hemal.Mustafa@montgomerycountymd.gov

To Get A Similar Program Started In Your Community

1) Need to review local zoning laws.

- 2006 – Montgomery County's Zoning Text Amendment permits access modification in setback areas "by right" rather than zoning variance.

2) Need to include both new construction and renovation for greater impact.

- Program implemented in March 2007, and as of August, 2008, Montgomery County Permitting had issued 12 permits. 8 are for new construction, 1 for an alteration, and 3 for an addition. **Renovation is where we anticipate the most growth, over time.**

3) Duplicate this program using our guidelines.

For history and all related forms and guidelines, go to the Design for Life Montgomery website.
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/hhs/ads/DesignForLife/DesignForLifeMontgomery.asp

Endorsed By

League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, MD

Montgomery County Civic Federation



Housing Opportunities Commission

Montgomery County Commission on Aging

Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities*

Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

***Founding Organization**

Design For Life Montgomery Workgroup

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Strategies for Independent Living

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Greater Capital Area Association
of Realtors®

This PowerPoint presentation is available for broad use with permission/notification.

We gladly share with all who might want to duplicate this voluntary program in their community, with credit given for portions used.

For more information, please contact:

Design for Life Montgomery Workgroup

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Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

Aging and Disability Services

Commission on People with Disabilities

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